REMARKS

Applicant submits this Response to the Office Action mailed January 4, 2006. In this Response, Applicant has amended claim 10, canceled claims 2, 4, 12, 14 and 15 (without prejudice to re-presenting the subject matter thereof at a future time), and added new claims 18-20. Claims 5, 7, 10, 16 and 18-20 are now pending. No new matter has been added.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,652,789 to Miner et al. ("Miner") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,747,970 to Lamb et al. ("Lamb"). Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider these rejections based upon the following.[1]

Claim 5 recites a method that includes:

> establishing at least one event record corresponding to the call, the event record comprising user information and a plurality of telephone identifiers associated with the plurality of parties;
> associating the event record with an event time;
> requesting authorization from the user by instant message sent via a data network to initiate the call, based on a current time and the event time; and
> initiating the call to the plurality of parties on behalf of the user using the plurality of telephone identifiers, based on an affirmative response to the authorization request from the user, the affirmative response sent by the user over the data network.

Neither Miner nor Lamb, either individually or in combination, teach or suggest the method recited by claim 5. For example, neither Miner nor Lamb describes "establishing at least one event record corresponding to the call, the event record comprising user information and a plurality of telephone identifiers associated with the plurality of parties ," and "initiating the call to the plurality of parties on behalf of the user using the plurality of telephone identifiers, based on an affirmative response to the authorization request from the user, the affirmative response sent by the user over the data network," as recited in claim 5. Applicant notes that Miner

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[1] As Applicant's remarks with respect to the Examiner's rejections are sufficient to overcome these rejections, Applicant's silence as to assertions by the Examiner in the Office Action or certain requirements that may be applicable to such rejections (e.g., whether a reference constitutes prior art, motivation to combine references) is not a concession by Applicant that such assertions are accurate or such requirements have been met, and Applicant reserves the right to analyze and dispute such in the future.

describes a reminder entry that permits the connecting of a call to a single party (through the use of a "pointer" stored in the reminder to the contact information of the party), not an event record that includes a plurality of telephone identifiers associated with a plurality of parties or initiating a call to the plurality of parties using the plurality of phone numbers. Lamb likewise does not describe such an event record; at best, Lamb describes the establishment of a conference call amongst multiple parties by coordinating the calling of each party into the conference through its "user agent." (Lamb, col. 54, lines 8-16.) Lamb does not describe an event record that includes user information and a plurality of telephone identifiers, as recited in claim 5. The absence of at least these elements of claim 5 from Miner and Lamb indicate that claim is patentable over the Miner and/or Lamb references, and Applicant therefore respectfully requests that that Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 5.

Claim 16 recites a computer readable medium comprising computer program code to perform the method steps recited in claim 5. Based on the foregoing discussion of claim 5, Applicant believes claim 16 to be patentable over Miner and/or Lamb for at least the same reasons as claim 5, and respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 16 as well.

Claim 10 recites an apparatus that includes:

> a receiver for receiving via the data network event data associated with the caller,
> a calendar system for storing event data comprising a plurality of telephone identifiers for connecting with the plurality of and a time period for connecting;
> a server for providing a first telephone number associated with the caller and the plurality of telephone identifiers to the telephone network in order to establish a call connection between the first telephone number and each of the plurality of telephone identifiers; and
> a transmitter for connecting the caller via the telephone network to the plurality of parties based on the event data, wherein the transmitter determines that a current time is within the time period for connecting, notifies the caller by instant message sent via the data network that a connection is about to take place, receives confirmation from the caller via the data network to initiate the connection to the one or more parties, determines based on the event data the first telephone number and the plurality of telephone identifiers, and provides the first telephone number and the plurality of telephone identifiers to the server in order to establish the call connection via the telephone network.

Neither Miner nor Lamb, either individually or in combination, teach or suggest the apparatus recited by claim 10. For example, neither Miner nor Lamb describes "a calendar system for storing event data comprising a plurality of telephone identifiers for connecting with the plurality of and a time period for connecting," and "a transmitter for connecting the caller via the telephone network to the plurality of parties based on the event data, wherein the transmitter . . . determines based on the event data the first telephone number and the plurality of telephone identifiers, and provides the first telephone number and the plurality of telephone identifiers to the server in order to establish the call connection via the telephone network," as recited in claim 10. As Applicant noted with respect to claim 5, Miner describes a reminder entry that permits the connecting of a call to a single party (through the use of a "pointer" stored in the reminder to the contact information of the party), not an event record that includes a plurality of telephone identifiers associated with a plurality of parties or initiating a call to the plurality of parties using the plurality of phone numbers. Lamb likewise does not describe such an event record; at best, Lamb describes the establishment of a conference call amongst multiple parties by coordinating the calling of each party into the conference through its "user agent." (Lamb, col. 54, lines 8-16.) Lamb does not describe an event record that includes user information and a plurality of telephone identifiers, as recited in claim 10. The absence of at least these elements of claim 10 from Miner and Lamb indicate that claim is patentable over the Miner and/or Lamb references, and Applicant therefore respectfully requests that that Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 10. As claim 7 depends from claim 10, and therefore includes all of the limitations of claim 10, Applicant believes claim 7 to be patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 10,[2] and thus respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 7 as well.

Applicant has added new claims 18-20. Claim 18 recites a system that includes:

> means for establishing at least one event record corresponding to the call,
> the event record comprising user information and a plurality of telephone
> identifiers associated with the plurality of parties;
> means for associating the event record with an event time;

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[2] As Applicant's remarks with respect to the base independent claims are sufficient to overcome the Examiner's rejections of all claims dependent therefrom, Applicant's silence as to the Examiner's assertions with respect to dependent claims is not a concession by Applicant to the Examiner's assertions as to these claims, and Applicant reserves the right to analyze and dispute such assertions in the future.

means for requesting authorization from the user by instant message sent via a data network to initiate the call, based on a current time and the event time; and

means for initiating the call to the plurality of parties on behalf of the user using the plurality of telephone identifiers, based on an affirmative response to the authorization request from the user, the affirmative response sent by the user over the data network.

Neither Miner nor Lamb, either individually or in combination, teach or suggest the system recited by claim 18. For example, neither Miner nor Lamb describes "means for establishing at least one event record corresponding to the call, the event record comprising user information and a plurality of telephone identifiers associated with the plurality of parties ," and "means for initiating the call to the plurality of parties on behalf of the user using the plurality of telephone identifiers, based on an affirmative response to the authorization request from the user, the affirmative response sent by the user over the data network," as recited in claim 18. As Applicant noted with respect to claim 5, Miner describes a reminder entry that permits the connecting of a call to a single party (through the use of a "pointer" stored in the reminder to the contact information of the party), not an event record that includes a plurality of telephone identifiers associated with a plurality of parties or initiating a call to the plurality of parties using the plurality of phone numbers. Lamb likewise does not describe such an event record; at best, Lamb describes the establishment of a conference call amongst multiple parties by coordinating the calling of each party into the conference through its "user agent." (Lamb, col. 54, lines 8-16.) Lamb does not describe an event record that includes user information and a plurality of telephone identifiers, as recited in claim 18. The absence of at least these elements of claim 18 from Miner and Lamb indicate that claim is patentable over the Miner and/or Lamb references, and Applicant therefore respectfully requests that that Examiner indicate the allowability of claim 18.

New claims 19 and 20 depend from claims 5 and 16, respectively. As these claims include all of the limitations of claims 5 and 16, Applicant believes these claims to be patentable over Miner and/or Lamb for at least the same reasons as claims 5 and 16, and therefore respectfully requests indication of the allowability of claims 19 and 20.
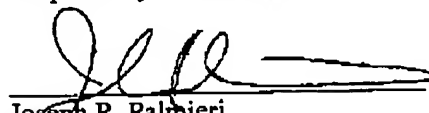
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested. If there are any outstanding issues which need to be resolved to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative by phone at the number indicated below to discuss such issues. To the extent necessary, a petition for extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made, the fee for which should be charged to deposit account number 07-2347. With respect to this application, please charge any other necessary fees and credit any overpayment to that account.

Respectfully submitted,

May 3, 2006

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING/TRANSMISSION (37 CFR 1.8(a))

I hereby certify that this correspondence is, on the date shown below, being transmitted by facsimile to the United States Patent Office at 571-273-8300.

Dated: May 3, 2006   Signature: _Christian R. Andersen_ (Christian R. Andersen)